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STORM OVER PASADENA

By Frank Chodorov

"Education for Democracy" is a sales slogan steeped in the American tradition; so also is the adjective "progressive". Every American mother is strong for democracy, and an educational system that promises to fit her offspring for it wins her support; especially so, if the system is the very latest thing, le dernier cri. It was not necessary, when they first advanced it, for the advocates of "progressive" education to either define the kind of "democracy" they propose to feed the children or to explain the superiority of their system over that in vogue. The slogan and the adjective sufficed.

But, as every advertising man knows, the merchandise must live up to the promise in the slogan or the customers will violently resent the deception. That is what happened in Pasadena. In that California city, the curious citizenry looked into this "Education for Democracy", found it a fraud and sent it packing. The proponents of "progressivism" are quite annoyed by this setback, and because they have so much at stake they are not taking it gracefully. The "Pasadena Case" is assuming the proportions of a cause célèbre.

II

These are the essential facts in the case.

In 1948, the city of Pasadena hired Mr. Willard E. Goslin to be its Superintendent of Schools. This Mr. Goslin was no ordinary educator; he was not only an advocate of "progressivism", he was a leading exponent of it. Before coming to Pasadena he had spent five years pushing the product into the Minneapolis schools (where he also ran into public resentment), and during that time he had climbed to the presidency of the National Association of School Administrators. His prominence in "progressive" circles is an important factor in the present fuss.

Superintendent Goslin ripped into the going system without regard to tradition, personalities or costs. He could do nothing else if he were to be true to the cause he espoused; for "progressive" education is so different in spirit and purpose from what has long been accepted as education, that it becomes a replacement, not an alteration.

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The basic doctrine of this "Education for Democracy" is that the democracy which stems from the axiom of natural rights is not democracy at all. In the "democracy of the future" the individual is of no account, the group is everything. You cannot have a free society, the doctrine holds, if everybody is a free agent; he must adjust himself to the over-all pattern, presumably devised by the "best" brains.

The business of education, then, is to mould the mind of the child to an acceptance of the supremacy of the group. He must learn that he is not an end in himself; he is only one of many. That being so, the principle and all-pervading subject in the school curriculum is the "activity program" -- consisting of projects in which the student acquires the habit of cooperative submissiveness.

It follows that the acquisition of knowledge is only incidental to the educative process. It is quite unnecessary to teach the child the three R's; he will pick these things up somehow as he goes along. Why cram his mind with information and values that must be false, simply because they come out of the past, when the real business of his life will be to make the values of the new social order?

Competitive examinations, marks and honor grades are taboo in this system, because they emphasize differences in capacities; in the new social order all will be equal in genius. Pupils must therefore be passed from grade to grade, regardless of their proficiency, because they must be kept with their age groups. No demands must be made of the child that might single him out of the rest. Education is not for the development of individuality, it is for "building citizens of tomorrow".

III

Mr. Goslin's innovations in the schoolroom bounced back on the home. The parents did not approve of this kind of education. They sent their children to school to "learn something", and when they remonstrated because nothing was being learned, they were rebuffed for being "behind the times". In some cases, the children undertook, apparently under advice, to "re-educate" the parents. The resulting bewilderment and resentment found expression in social gatherings, but nothing could be done -- until Mr. Goslin found it necessary to appeal to the democratic process. He needed money for his innovations -- lots of it -- and that called for a vote: an appeal to popular opinion.

Well, the verdict of Pasadena was that "Education for Democracy" is not education at all; it is training for the collectivized society. It is Socialism insinuating itself into the mores by the misuse of accepted traditions. They did not like that, said so openly and vigorously in

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the campaign, and turned thumbs down on the request for money. Having got started, the people were not to be denied; they demanded and got, through the Board of Education, the resignation of Mr. Goslin.

That should have closed the case. It hasn't, only because the protagonists of "progressive" education cannot afford to take the rebuff; parents in other cities are up in arms over this obvious attempt to use the schools to scuttle the American tradition of individualism, and the defeat of Pasadena might prove disastrous. Mr. Goslin is a symbol.

A book on the "Pasadena Case" has been published; its thesis is that "reactionary" forces have not only done Mr. Goslin wrong, but have also set back the cause of "modern" education. The book has been favorably reviewed by top-drawer educators. Pasadena and the country are being flooded with literature in which it is made to appear that behind the ousting of Mr. Goslin are the world's worst "economic barons".

Implicit and explicit in this campaign to vindicate Mr. Goslin is the doctrine of the infallibility of experts. The "progressives" insist that this job of preparing the minds of the coming generation for the "new America" is highly technical, requiring specialized knowledge quite beyond the comprehension of laymen. Parenthood in itself is no justification for interference. As for the taxpayer who must foot the bill, he is blocking "progress" when he interposes a vested right; does the patient write his own prescription because he pays the doctor's fee? The experts must have a free hand.

This doctrine of expertise is sacrosanct with all "progressives". Upon it rests their whole program for the reconstruction of man and society. The Pasadena affair, in which the rights of the parents and taxpayers took precedence, is a major challenge. They must win this battle; the parent-taxpayer must be put in his place, once and for all.

Currently, their tactics consist of denying that the traditional brand of democracy -- quite different from the kind they hope to introduce -- had anything to do with their upset. Their literature makes much of the "outside" and "sinister" influences that bore down on their Mr. Goslin. (The fact that the writers of these articles are not natives of Pasadena is overlooked; as is the fact that outside "experts" played an important part in introducing Mr. Goslin's innovations.)

It is not true that the opposition to Goslinism arose outside of Pasadena. It started when a group of the city's foremost citizens organized the Pasadena School Development Council to stand watch over their children's education. It was a local movement -- and it was democratic. On the other hand, it has been proven, and so stated by a state

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legislature investigating committee, that Mr. Goslin had imported an experienced political activist to prepare his campaign literature and to direct the activities of his Pasadena Teachers Association.

IV

The "Pasadena Case" points up a political principle: democracy can be quite effective on the local level. Its natural habitat is the town hall meeting. Where the people have the opportunity of expressing their views directly, and of making them prevail, it is a certainty that those who presume to fit society into a predetermined pattern will never acquire the power to try it. If the individual should be traduced into giving up his rights to the experimenter, he has the means of recalling them when he finds the consequences unpalatable.

Of this fact the proponents of Socialism -- including the proponents of "progressive" education -- are well aware. For that reason, their efforts must be directed toward devitalizing the democratic method. Since it is in the smaller community that the individual retains some power over his personal affairs, as well as some influence on the affairs of the community, the aim of all Socialistic schemes is to centralize authority -- to remove it is far as possible from interference from the individual.

Hence, the "progressive" educators have been in the forefront of the campaign for Federal subsidization of schools, and it is a certainty that the setback at Pasadena will stir them to great efforts in that direction. If the local school systems are beholden to Washington for their existence, it is only necessary to gain control of the Federal Department of Education to be able to impose on these schools any curriculum or pedagogical method the "experts" may decide upon. To secure such control, the teaching fraternity must be organized into a pressure group. The management of this group -- that is, the active "progressives" -- thus becomes in effect the Department of Education.

Those of us who are not yet ready to accept the Spartan ideal -- that the child belongs to the State and that his education consists of preparation for its requirements -- are pleased by the Pasadena victory. But, we must recognize that the fight there was only a skirmish. The big battle will be fought at Washington. The tactics of the "progressives" will be to drag in the trojan horse of subsidization, and to shed crocodile tears for the "underprivileged". It would be well that the forces of freedom be prepared for them.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VIII, No. 24

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By Frank C. Hanighen June 13, 1951

EISENHOWER: The argument which rages in Capitol cloakrooms is not about whether Eisenhower is in hot water, but just how hot is the water. This discussion has risen sharply in the past 72 hours, after receipt in the Capital of first reports from a Congressional mission to Europe which for some reason received little notice in the press. These reports are not of an optimistic nature.

This mission has inspired much excited talk and many rumors on the Hill. It is understood that Eisenhower sent for such a Congressional group, that the State Department at first frowned on it, then finally gave approval. The sixteen members were drawn from the Committees of Foreign Affairs, Armed Services and Appropriations and headed by Chairman Richards of Foreign Affairs.

The big question is why did Eisenhower summon this group. The conclusion is widely drawn that something has gone wrong with the European Army project, that appropriations are badly needed (note inclusion of Appropriations Committee members) and that the European Commander had to take this extraordinary step to seek Congressional help.

Few doubt that Eisenhower chose this method -- having the Committee go to Paris -- so as to avoid making a trip to Washington. With the controversy over Far East policy boiling, the last thing Ike would care to do would be to visit Washington.

(According to those who ought to know, former Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy phoned Eisenhower, to advise him not to return to the United States.)

Meanwhile, from various sources abroad have come increasingly bleak reports on the European Army problem as follows: (1) that the American Commander's recent swing around Northern Europe was disillusioning; (2) that in the case of the Dutch, Ike had to employ rather harsh language; (3) that several times recently, he has been in a mood to consider throwing up the job. Resistance of European politicos to necessary military and economic measures has raised the General's temper.

In New York, where the Eisenhower-for-President plans recently took an upturn, there reigns embarrassed silence.

* * * * *

ANOTHER GENERAL: We remember, during the war, the following episode: in a room, filled with Senators, much excited talk that a young general was prepared to risk his career and appear before one of their committees to reveal a cabal to transfer the then Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall. The young general was outraged, it was said, that agents of a foreign power should scheme with American officials to do such a thing. Our flashback in memory dims; days passed and the plot against Marshall collapsed, without youth taking the risk. The young general was Wedemeyer.

So, we were not too surprised when General Wedemeyer this week did what so many observers here have so long and vainly hoped some high officer would do. He asked for retirement and told his story to the representatives of the people. The decision to speak out was for him (for any officer) undoubtedly difficult. But he has proved, among other things, his sincerity and courage. Will that example become an inspiration to other officers?

We liked the passages in which he effectively supported the Hoover-Taft thesis (called "sea-air defense") of American strategy. Essential to that is the converse, the so-called strategy which has so fatally entangled us in Korea. We liked a few paragraphs from the Wedemeyer testimony which did not get published in newspapers: General Wedemeyer: "My fear is this: . . . Supposing this enemy, this potential

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enemy [Russia] used some more powder kegs he has created around his periphery. And he were to do that again and again and again in these various areas; a fruitless effort, militarily, and still the real enemy is not being damaged but we are suffering seriously, economically. We are beginning to. Economically we are beginning to feel pressures, and we are losing -- I cannot emphasize it too much, sir -- the finest commodity we have, American manhood. . . . If we pit our manhood against the manhood of our potential enemy, I say to you, sir, for whatever my military opinion is worth, that we are going to lose. . . ."

Sen. Stennis: "Finally lose?" Gen. Wedemeyer: "Yes sir, . . . I want American ingenuity, I want American technology, to protect the things that I hold dear. I don't want to spill American blood all over the battlefields of Europe and the Far East, sir, indiscriminately, and that is my fear."

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BEHIND THE NEWS: The British are still shipping strategic materials and arms to the Chinese Communists despite their pledges to the contrary. Some flagrant cases of this continuing traffic are now being studied by the White House.

---- If there is a real "China Lobby", it spends little money in Washington and shows singularly little activity, according to those who cover this beat. Indeed, the Administration demand for a probe of the "Chinese Nationalist Lobby" is regarded as a scheme for "throwing dust in the eyes of the public"; it is aimed at offsetting charges which, it is expected, will be brought against the "Chinese Communist Lobby" by the McCarran committee. That group has for some time been preparing hearings on the Institute of Pacific Relations and the Amerasia case.

---- When General Wedemeyer said he wanted rearmament of Japan, he was the first military man who talked about a subject, much discussed by officials in private, never in public. There is a peace treaty in the works. . . .

---- News comes from Omaha that a Wedemeyer-for-President organization is being formed in that city. Backers have distributed nationally copies of a Sunday Supplement of the Omaha World-Herald containing a highly interesting feature article on Wedemeyer's life and career. The General was born and raised in Omaha.

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HOMEWORK: It is generally agreed that the best cross-questioning of Acheson was that performed by Senator Brewster, whose interrogations were well-informed and penetrating. But the Maine Senator has been one of very few members of the MacArthur Committee who has really done effective work. Generally, the questioning has been poorly executed and displayed conspicuous lack of knowledge of the subjects involved -- few observers here will disagree with such a verdict. A number of reasons are advanced to explain this poor work:

(1) Each Senator works by himself and tries to win the spotlight. Those Senators who have taken some trouble, "done their homework", keep their knowledge to themselves and neither help nor collaborate with their colleagues. They want the honor of the "scoops" and headlines.

(2) There was a deplorable lack of preparation, due partly to the overconfident attitude of GOP members during the days when MacArthur was on the stand. As a result -- one key Senator two days before General Marshall was scheduled to take the stand had not a single question prepared. Even the scanty staffs had been working on other projects and had not been assigned to this field.

(3) The volume of other work distracted the Senators on the Committee; at first they spent most of their time in the Committee room, but later they had to absent themselves to take care of neglected business.

But the principal reason for poor work given by those who have watched such problems on the Hill is simply lack of adequate research and publicity staffs. Sal-

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aries offered are not high and funds to cover the work are small. Some individuals who have joined staffs eager to do a job against Big Government have become discouraged and quit. Others are simply time-servers. Even if a number of good men were obtained, it takes time to train them in this particular kind of work. A number of projects to raise money from private sources for research bureaus to help the Opposition in Congress have failed, or when started have fizzled.

Finally, the overwhelming power of Big Government, supplied with ample funds, is difficult to meet. A few weeks ago when the Joint Chiefs of Staff were preparing to testify, the following wisecrack came from the Pentagon: "Half the people here are thinking up questions which may be asked, and the other half are preparing answers." A divided Opposition, supplied with diminutive funds stands little chance in this field when pitted against an Executive arm enjoying billions.

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A NEW BIPARTISANISM: Those who want a realignment of the two major parties, who desire a grand alliance of Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans, have been reflecting thoughtfully -- and hopefully -- on an event of the past ten days which has not been thoroughly evaluated in the press. The event was a vote in the MacArthur Committee in which 5 Southerners joined 10 Republicans in rebuking Mr. Acheson. Now, there have been many votes on domestic issues in which Southern Democrats and Republicans joined to win. But this was the first time, say Congressional leaders, that such a union occurred on a foreign policy matter, that important Southern Democrats joined with Republicans and defied the State Department.

The matter arose when Mr. Dean Acheson objected to making public a confidential State Department memorandum on the subject of Formosa. The memo had been sent a year ago to foreign service personnel around the world, urging the latter to play down the importance of Formosa to the United States. Parts of the memo had been already published in the press. Acheson pleaded with the Joint Committee, headed by Senator Russell, not to reveal the full text of the document to the profane gaze of the American people. Senator Russell (Ga.), together with Senators George (Ga.), Byrd (Va.), Stennis (Miss.) and Johnson (Texas) -- all Democrats -- went with 10 Republicans in voting for release.

Subsequent editorial comment shows that Mr. Acheson's objections were not popularly approved and the nature of the document generally deplored. But few commentators noted this sprouting of a Southern Democrat-Republican agreement on foreign policy. It was, indeed, bipartisanism with a vengeance.

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TIDELANDS: The House Judiciary Committee will shortly introduce a bill on the tidelands matter: whether the Federal Government or the states will have jurisdiction over the gas and oil operations in offshore areas. Curiously, a basic constitutional question has been completely sidetracked in the legal and legislative battle that has been raging around this submerged land issue since "honest" Harold Ickes brought it up during his incumbency as Secretary of the Interior.

The Supreme Court has ruled that the necessity of the Government (oil for military needs) gives it first claim on these lands. But, the real issue, the one overlooked, is the right of the Federal Government to tax lands within the jurisdiction of the states. This matter was discussed in the Constitutional Convention of 1789, and it was there decided that the taxing of land was the peculiar prerogative of the state governments. This would certainly include submerged land, under rivers and lakes, unquestionably within state boundaries; and state boundaries were in those days presumed to extend to the "three-mile limit".

The constitutional question that Congress will rule on -- whether the members are aware of it or not -- is whether the Federal Government will be empowered to tax lands within state boundaries. If it vests title in these lands in the Federal Gov-

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ernment, it will in effect overrule the principle of taxation decided on by the Founding Fathers.

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"MCCARTHYISM": For the best analysis of what the so-called liberals call "McCarthyism", see the excellent piece, "Senator McCarthy's Model" by William F. Buckley, Jr., in the Freeman (May 21). Actually, although that was not his principal intention, Mr. Buckley outlined in the course of his piece the conflict between intelligentsia and the people. He tentatively uses the classification, "university crowd", versus "non-university" crowd. But what he means is essentially the same struggle described previously in this column -- between the "intelligentsia" and the bulk of the American people. This conflict today is assuming proportions, the importance of which may prove decisive in our history.

As a matter of fact, "intelligentsia" vs. "masses" is not an exact terminology as applied to America. The situation here is far different from that in Eastern Europe, where a relatively small educated class rules over millions of illiterate workers and peasants. In this country, many of those who do not belong to the "Brahmin caste" of intellectuals are much better educated -- in the real sense of the word -- than the Brahmins who presume to rule what they very patronizingly term the masses of "common men".

What we may be witnessing now is a reawakening of those who have not belonged to the Brahmin conspiracy, who read, discuss and think and who are now, here and there, leading the popular upsurge. Their sudden reappearance has badly jarred the complacency of such as President Conant who refers to them as "self-appointed critics", and the fact that they attack the fellow travellers has led to the accusation of "smear". If these new leaders do use "smear tactics", it may be because they learned this from the Brahmins who made generous use of "fascist" and "pro-Nazi", etc., to apply to believers in American traditionalism. It is rather incongruous for the Brahmins to cry "ouch" after the "smear terror" which they themselves have conducted so intensively for a decade.

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THE BOOK FRONT: Some red-hot letters have been arriving in this office as a result of our comments in recent issues on the power of New York book reviewers to "make or break" a book and how New York literary organs have a long record of "making" Left-its books and "breaking" those of the Right. One correspondent complained about the review of Freda Utley's The China Story in the Saturday Review of Literature; another about a review of the same book in a Southwestern paper. The latter wrote: "Can we do something about the reviewing situation? Can we work out a code for reviewing and secure enough subscriptions and advertising to support a weekly magazine that covers the whole literary output adequately and follows such a code in a manner beyond question?"

The creation of such a code should take into account a speech by Senator Owen Brewster (Maine) in the Senate on June 5. He described a group of writers who glorified the Chinese Communists in their books, and then boosted the books (of each other) in the New York book review supplements. "And where the crowd really went to town", said Brewster, "was when they swung the hatchet on the few authors and journalists who tried to warn Americans of the Communist peril." The Maine Senator placed into the Congressional Record (June 5, page 6301) a valuable chart illustrating how the book reviewing "plot" was accomplished.

This week we received a pamphlet "Comments of the Reviewers" which describes the fate of a Caxton book, The Return of Adam Smith, by George S. Montgomery, Jr. This is a highly interesting volume which seems to have been "smothered" by silence. For instance, it was not even listed, much less reviewed, by the New York Times book section. And it sold a total of 1719 copies. (This pamphlet may be obtained from The Caxton Printers, Caldwell, Idaho.)

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